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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1           1. A method for creating and delivering a document, the method comprising the  
2 steps of:

3           receiving an information request;  
4           acquiring data regarding the information request;  
5           extracting data using the acquired data;  
6           applying a rule to the extracted data to produce result data; and  
7           transmitting the result data to a location and in a manner specified by the  
8           information request.

1           2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of formatting the  
2 information request into a work item using the acquired data.

1           3. The method of claim 2, wherein the work item includes one from a group of:  
2           a reference to a file;  
3           a destination for the displayable result;  
4           a transport mechanism that specifies how displayable result is to be delivered;  
5           a rendering object for performing the extracting and applying steps;  
6           a name of a server on which the rendering object is to be executed; and  
7           a priority for the work item indicating an order for performing the work item  
8           relative to other work items.

1           4. The method of claim 2, wherein work item is used in the step of extracting,  
2     applying, processing and transmitting.

1           5. The method of claim 2, wherein step of acquiring data regarding the  
2     information request includes:

- 3           displaying a user interface;
- 4           providing default values;
- 5           receiving input for at least one field;
- 6           formatting data element for queuing;
- 7           assembling data elements into a work item; and
- 8           adding the work item to a work queue.

1           6. The method of claim 2, wherein step of extracting data includes:

- 2           receiving and accessing the work item;
- 3           retrieving the acquired data from the work item;
- 4           using the acquired data to generate a query;
- 5           applying the query to the database; and
- 6           storing the result of the query as part of the work item.

1           7. The method of claim 2, wherein step of applying a rule to the extracted data  
2     includes:

- 3           receiving the extracted data from a source; and



3 a first module having a transport client for acquiring data and generating a work  
4 item;  
5 a second module for applying a business rule to the acquired data to produce  
6 result data, the second module coupled to the first module to receive the  
7 work item; and  
8 a third module for producing and transmitting a document from the result data, the  
9 third module coupled to the second module to receive the work item.

1 11. The system of claim 10, further comprising a fourth module for producing  
2 query data by applying the acquired data to a database, the input of the fourth module  
3 coupled to receive the work item from the first module, and the fourth module coupled to  
4 output the work item to the third module, and wherein the third module uses the query  
5 data as result data for producing and transmitting the document.

1 12. The system of claim 10, further comprising:  
2 a work queue for storing work items, the work queue coupled to the first module,  
3 the second module, and the third module for receiving work items; and  
4 a scheduler coupled to the work queue for processing work items, determining the  
5 status of work items and sending work items to the second module and the third module.

1 13. The system of claim 10, wherein the first module further comprises a  
2 transport client, the transport client coupled to work queue for storing work items therein,  
3 the transport client acquiring data and creating work items from the data.

14. The system of claim 10, wherein the second module further comprises a rendering object, the rendering object coupled to the work queue for receiving work items from the work queue and for storing work items into the work queue, the rendering object for applying a business rule to the acquired data to produce the result data.

15. The system of claim 11, wherein the fourth module further comprises a rendering object, the rendering object coupled to the work queue for receiving work items from the work queue and for storing work items into the work queue, the rendering object for generating and applying a query on a database and adding query results to the work item.

16. The system of claim 10, wherein the third module further comprises a transport object, the transport object coupled to the work queue for receiving work items from the work queue, the transport object coupled to a corresponding delivery mechanism for sending the document, the transport object receiving a work item, converting the result data into a document suited to the delivery mechanism and transmitting the document over the delivery mechanism.

17. The system of claim 16, further comprising:

a routing table having information for resource allocation, resource availability, local or remote processing, and time of processing, the routing table coupled to the third module; and

- 1 wherein the transport objects of the third module use the routing table to
- 2 determine a time to use and type of delivery mechanism for transmitting the document.
- 3